‘LEGO ISLAND’

UK QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

‘FINAL REPORT’

Prepared for : LEGO MEDIA INTERNATIONAL

September 1997

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- **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

1) To assess the responses of children [7-11yrs] to ‘LEGO Island’, providing specific feedback for product modification and development

2) To consider pertinent issues of child development and/or education relating to ‘LEGO Island’

3) To provide a quantitative ‘feel’ [in line with US approach] of children’s rating of ‘LEGO Island’ in the following key areas

Ease of Use

Childproof

Educational

Entertainment

Design Features

Value

- **SAMPLE & METHODOLOGY**

3 Friendship Paired Depth Interviews [6 children in total]

2 x Boys 7-8 yrs... ... 1 x Girls

6 Mini Groups [24 children in total]

2 x Boys 8 - 9 yrs

2 x Boys 9-10 yrs

1 x Girls 9-10 yrs

1 x Boys 10-11 yrs

Duration of all interviews between 1hr 10 mins — 1hr 30 mins

QUOTAS APPLIED

Minimum 2-3 LEGO 'Enthusiasts' amongst Boys 7-9
[*8 'Enthusiasts' Achieved*]

As many LEGO 'Enthusasists' as possible amongst Boys across sample

[***14 'Enthusiasts' Achieved in total across all 'boy' interviews, with some representation in each age cell***]

All to be Non Rejectors of LEGO

All to play computer games nowadays […and to have played 'recently']

All to play CD Rom games

All to have access to a computer with CD/ Windows '95

'Some' to have computer at home, others may play on friends computer

FIELDWORK DATES / LOCATION

28th & 29th August 97
Birmingham [Sutton Coldfield]

- **INTERVIEW APPROACH**

Interviews were structured in ‘Friendship Pairs’, consisting of two children who know each other but who are not ‘best’ friends, and Mini Groups, made up 4 children in total, with each child knowing at least one other in the group.

In this way, the research was set up to accommodate varying levels of social and emotional development across the age divides, and to ensure that factors such as ‘emulation’, ‘competitiveness’, ‘intimidation’ and the like, did not impede children’s full participation in and contribution to the research.

The interview was broken into 4 broad sections [*See Appendix*] :

Initial introduction and broad background information
[Circa 15 Mins]

Game Playing Experience [.. moderator observation, with assistance where necessary]
[Circa 35 Mins]

Pleniary Session -- spontaneous responses to ‘LEGO Island’
[Circa 15 Mins]

U.S Questionnaire/Supplementary Questionnaire Completion [Circa 15 Mins]

Given the range of areas and activities to be covered within a relatively brief period of time, it was not possible to cover and/or probe all areas in each interview, but rather to gain a ‘feel’ of relevant issues across the sample as a whole.

1) U.S. 'SELF- COMPLETION' QUESTIONNAIRE

All children [apart from those interviewed in the Friendship Paired Depths] were asked to complete the 'standard' U.S. Pre-set questionnaire [*findings on following page*] .

It must be noted that in terms of qualitative practices and procedures in UK, this approach to interviewing children is regarded with some caution. A number of issues are raised regarding children's ability [intellectually and emotionally] to understand the exact nature of specific questions even when language has been simplified. It is very hard for children [especially those under 10 years] to 'admit' [even to themselves] that they do not understand, and it is quite likely that they will 'make up' a response [particularly where peers seem to be forging ahead].

Furthermore, children below the age of circa 9 or 10 years [depending on 'maturity'] are predisposed to a rather 'idealistic' view of things, and are likely to over-emphasise 'positives'. Whilst this tendency can be probed and understood more fully using flexible qualitative techniques, it must be recognised that this is not possible in the given situation. All responses should be considered in light of this information.

Finally, it should also be noted that several of the questions asked have more than one strand to which a child might reply [eg *"it is easy <u>and</u> fast enough to get to the information centre……'……..'..the programme always explains what you need to do <u>or</u> let's you know when you've made a mistake…'..].* This of course means that there is a further degree of ambiguity in children's responses- again, this should be borne in mind.

Given the foregoing considerations, it is advised that questionnaire findings should be regarded within the context of more detailed responses to 'LEGO Island' given by children across the interview as a whole.

	Boys 7yrs	Girls 7	Boys8	Boys 8	Boys 9	Girls 10	Boys 10	Boys 10	Boys 11	TOTAL
Ease of Use	**2.29**	**3.33**	**3.96**	2.29 + 3.96+ 4.38 + 2.29 = **12.92**	2.71 + 3.13 + 3.13 + 2.71= **11.68**	3.96 + 2.50 + 3.33 = **9.79**	1.88 + 2.92 + 1.46 + 2.92=**9.18**	3.54 + 3.54 + 1.46 + 2.71=**11.25**	2.50 + 4.55 + 2.92 + 4.09=**14.06**	**3.02**
Childproof	**2.81**	**3.75**	**3.45**	4.06 + 4.44 + 2.81 + 4.06= **15.37**	2.50 + 3.44 + 2.81 + 3.75= **12.50**	3.75 + 2.19 + 3.12 = **9.06**	1.56 + 1.56 + 2.81 + 2.50=**8.43**	3.75 + 3.75 + 2.81 + 3.75=**14.06**	2.81 + 2.50 + 2.50 + 3.13=**10.94**	**3.09**
Education	**3.64**	**4.55**	**4.32**	3.64 + 5.00 + 3.64 + 3.64= **15.92**	2.95 + 4.10 + 3.41 + 2.50= **12.96**	3.32 + 2.73 + 2.73 = **8.78**	4.09 + 1.36 + 1.14+ 1.14=**7.73**	3.64 + 4.55 + 1.81 + 4.77=**14.77**	3.41 + 4.09 + 2.95 + 3.41**13.86**	**3.33**
Enter'nt	**3.61**	**4.45**	**4.44**	3.89 + 4.17 + 3.10 + 4.72= 15.88	2.78 + 4.17 + 2.78 + 3.89= **13.62**	3.39 + 3.33 + 3.33 = **10.55**	4.17 + 0 + 1.11 + 0.56=**5.84**	3.89 + 3.89 + 1 + 4.44=**13.22**	3.61 + 3.06 + 3.33 + 4.44=**14.44**	**3.31**
Design Features	**2.5**	**2.20**	**3.44**	3.75 + 3.75 + 3.44 + 3.13= 14.07	2.19 + 4.06 + 2.81 + 2.19 = **11.25**	3.75 + 2.81 + 2.81 =**9.37**	1.88 + 1.88 + 2.19 + 0.63=**6.58**	2.81 + 3.43 + 2.50 + 1.88=**10.62**	4.06 + 2.50 + 2.81 + 3.13=**12.50**	**2.79**
Value	**5**	**1**	**5**	5 + 5 + 1 + 2 = **13**	3 + 4 + 5 + 2= **14**	3 + 2+ 3 = **8**	5+ 1+ 2+ 3 =**11**	5+ 5+ 1+ 4 = **15**	5 + 5+ 5+ 4 = **19**	**3.50**
TOTAL	19.85 ÷6	19.28 ÷6	24.61÷6	87.16 +6÷4	87.16 ÷6÷4	55.55÷6÷3	48.76÷6÷4	78.92÷6÷4	84.80÷6÷4	
	3.31	**3.21**	**4.10**	**3.63**	**3.17**	**3.09**	**2.03**	**3.29**	**3.53**	**3.2**

See Appendix for Questionnaire details

The following table shows children's responses to the additional question area relating to 'desireability' of the product, and their [stated] likelihood to 'pester'.

Q: If you were out shopping with your 'Mum' would you

A] Really pester for it ?

B] Just mention it ?

C] Not bother to ask at all ?

F'SHIP PAIRS	A	B	C
Boys 7 yrs	✓		
Girls 7 yrs		✓	
Boys 8 yrs	✓		
MINI GROUPS			
Boys 8 yrs	✓✓	✓	✓
Boys 9 yrs	✓	✓✓	✓
Girls 10 yrs	✓✓	✓	
Boys 10 yrs			✓✓✓ ✓
Boys 10 yrs	✓	✓✓ ✓	
Boys 11 yrs		✓✓ ✓	✓

Although we must regard these findings in very general terms, it is interesting to note the ‘spread’ of responses from the children. Given their high receptivity to ‘newness’ and/or ‘novelty’ overall, along with the propensity of younger children to exaggerate the extent to which they ‘like’ something, we might expect to see an ‘over-coding’ at question [A] .

Whilst it is clear that there is a decline in motivation to ‘pester’ for LEGO Island at the older end of the age spectrum [where ‘gaming’ experience and expectations are likely to be highest], the majority of children [from all age breaks] fall into category [B] where they would ‘Just mention’ purchase, rather than wholeheartedly insist on it. Certainly, ‘first impressions’ of the game will need to harness stronger motivations if they are to generate the ‘Playground buzz’ and peer group popularity that is so important across this target age.

2) SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONNAIRE – BROAD LIKES, DISLIKES AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

To maximise the relatively short time we were able to spend with the children, and to ensure that we collected individual as well as group responses, a furthermore 'open-ended' questionnaire was administered to all respondents, except those interviewed in Friendship Pairs.

A number of recurring comments, along with consistently high or low scores across the questionnaires, highlighted broad areas of the game where appeal was clearly more of less strong. The following responses provide a 'summary overview' of children's perceptions and opinions of 'LEGO Island' overall .

OVERALL 'FEELING' ABOUT 'LEGO ISLAND'

This broadly corresponded with 'likelihood to pester' question already noted, with **some indication that the LEGO 'Enthusiasts' in our sample were most positive about the game overall**

"…..LEGO Island is brilliant !" [Boy 8]

"…..interesting and enjoyable " [B 10]

Those who can be described as the more serious 'Gamers' were the most scathing, although this is not surprising when we raise that they are currently playing '18 Rated' games, including 'Tomb Raider', 'Resident Evil', 'Blood' and 'Duke Newcome'. However, even amongst these *boys* there was some acknowledgement that 'LEGO Island' is

"….quite good **fun..**" [B 11]

Certainly, this 'fun' element has the potential to enhance the offer across a broad range of player types/ ages.

KEY 'LIKES'

RACING was commonly mentioned across the boy component of our sample, and this was also reflected in their clearly observed involvement whilst actually playing the game. The familiar [and more 'obvious'] intent of this aspect [ie to 'speed'/win] , along with the 'adrenalin' and excitement which they so love [and to some degree expect], made them eager to participate. Interestingly, there was some mention of **'control'** gratification for a few children, and this is an important motivational area across the child target which will be dealt with more fully later in the report [see *'Background Behaviours']*

"….I liked the racing car best because of control." [B9]

BUILDING - For several children this was the most 'different' or unique aspect of 'LEGO Island', and all boys were seen to be enthusiastic when they realised they could build their own car. There is clearly string appeal in unifying construction with 'gaming', and again this is likely to be more [but not exclusively] so for LEGO Enthusiasts

"….it's like building LEGO on a computer !.." [B 9]

This combination of **something familiar offered in a new or different way** hits a fundamental motivational note in terms of child development. Broadly, children's craving for novelty or newness ['unpredictability'] reflects their innate orientation to 'discover', to 'understand' and to 'conquer the unknown' [all fuel for their 'growth']. This is counterbalanced by a need for its direct opposite.ie 'familiarity', 'predictability' and so on [assuaging 'reassurance'/ security needs]. Either component taken to an extreme can create emotional 'dissonance' ie too *difficult/ too easy.* However, in many markets, we have found that where there is a stimulating interplay of both facets, children can be highly motivated.

These comments have relevance in terms of 'repeat ' play / 'lastability' , with more experienced 'Gamers' spontaneously requesting greater 'freedom' and 'choice' in, for example, personalizing their car. This might indicate that the current novelty factor inherent in the game is likely to be diluted relatively quickly for such player types.

EXPLORING – Several children felt that the 'freedom to roam' was different and exciting, with enough choice of places to visit and things to do.

"…You can do what you want…" [B10]

"….going around just finding out things…" [G10]

This was particularly appealing to the girls in our sample who seemed to have less need, in general, to find a 'purpose' or 'mission'.

The **'choice of transport'** was also commended by many, with particular note given to the skateboard, the motorbike and bicycle which were considered particularly 'novel', and as emerged in one pleniary session, seen to be the most relevant to 'their' world. This was seen to further enhance the sense of 'realism' so important to boys of 9/10 years +..

3D GRAPHICS – All but the youngest children mentioned the quality of the graphics as a strong positive, with the more serious 'gamers' again appreciating the degree of **'realism'** which they experienced

"..it was exciting because you thought that you were in the computer" [B9]

"it's like you're actually in the car." [B10]

"…the game was quite realistic.." [B11]

THE CHARACTERS – Several children liked 'the people' most of all [ie a main positive differentiator from other games], although few registered or recalled actual names

Specific detail was limited at this stage, but they were described as **'funny'** in general terms. From ad hoc comments picked up whilst observing play, the more 'quirky' or unexpected behaviors [eg 'backwards flip] *rather than dialogue*, and the ability of children to 'personalise' the appearance of different characters were especially appreciated.

THE MAIN THING THAT MAKES 'LEGO ISLAND' DIFFERENT FROM OTHER PROGRAMMES

The main distinctive qualities noted often corresponded with the things children 'liked most' about the programme.

Further mention was given to the fact that the game is obviously **targeted at children of their age** ['Tweens'] rather than those much younger ['Little Kids'] or much older ['Teens']. This was seen as a clear positive for most …even the more hardened 'Gamers' did not see it as 'babyish'. This was further reflected in coding of 'perceived target age' later in the questionnaire, when a majority of children felt the game to be aimed at their age group, with some also coding 'for older' and 'for younger' children as well. Later probing in the Pleniary Session revealed that the game is broadly perceived to be for a 7-11 year [**girl and boy**] spectrum, with no obvious dissociation at the older or younger ends of the sample , ie no coding skew to suggest that this is seen as 'not for me'.

Other comments on the games' distinctiveness related to the appeal of the **'LEGO'** theme - interestingly these comments were not made primarily by the younger [7-8yr old] children who were *all* themselves recruited as LEGO Enthusiasts.

The use of LEGO was seen as 'clever'by the older boys, in that it is at once **'real' and 'unreal'**

"..it's based on a real thing.." [B10]

"..its more realistic to LEGO life" [B11]

This increasing need for [and repeated mention of] 'realism' reflects the older child's identification with a more 'adult' world . The intermingling of **'fantasy and reality** in LEGO Island cleverly taps the needs of the child in transition,

providing the possibility of inhabiting two emotional territories, that of 'child' and that of 'adolescent'. [See *'Background Behaviours'*]

That the 'animated' world of LEGO holds appeal for both 'Enthusiasts' and 'Peripherals' across a wide age target indicates the potential of such programmes, over time, to further reinforce and enhance the brand in the consumer mind.

A further unusual aspect of the game was noted in the fact that there appear to be

"…**no levels to complete**.…you can't loose and you can't win "
[B9]

Although this [complex motivational] area would need to be explored in fuller detail, this was certainly not stated as a negative. We did see within our sample a number of children, across age and gender divides, who seemed less motivated by serious 'competition', and this may or may not change with increased 'gaming' experience. That said however, from observations, and ad hoc comments during play and in the pleniary session , there was an overriding sense that all children sought **a stronger sense of purpose**, **direction and accomplishment overall.**

KEY DISLIKES

The key areas of weakness given by children in the supplementary questionnaire can be summed up in terms of their **'INABILITY TO MOVE AROUND EASILY'**

This aspect of the game was cited [and observed to be] particularly frustrating, even for the more experienced 'Gamers' .

An inability to move between or within places, or even find out how to do so eroded enjoyment for several children; many were observed at points to establish a destination ['goal'] , only to loose sight of it again by distractions and/ or confusion.en route.. For most children ['Gamers'in particular], a lack of **control** [in physical and emotional terms] seems ultimately to diminish involvement and the more positive gaming 'challenge' which they enjoy.

This was clear from several comments of the questionnaire relating to the playing experience at the race track

"…I wanted to change the **control** and make it a bit more violent"
[B9]

"..in the car racing there wasn't a speed clock.…it would help you have **control** more, slow down on corners…" [B11]

"..[improve]..the way they plan the tracks because you weren't too sure which way to go…" [B10]

Other contributory impediments to 'logical' and/or 'fluid' movement, include the perceived **length of time** taken to get from one place to another, this was of course, distorted to some extent by their playing experience

> "..how long it took between the information and the place that we wanted to go.." [B9]

> "..how long it took to go from one place to another.." [B10]

> "..the beginning was too long." [B10]

The **amount of talking**, particularly by the Infomaniac, was also felt to hinder progress in this respect for many

> "..the man at the start because he spoke too long.." [B10]

> "..the way the man kept going on.." [B11]

There was some indication [from ad hoc comments made during play] that the **'operational 'speed of movement** itself also contributed to a sense of both 'slowness', and dislocation. So, for instance, moving from the garage where the card has been built to the race track was felt to be slow and/ or confusing, and this resulted for several children in further random clicking, inevitably taking some further off-course.

Although not specifically mentioned in response to questionnaire prompts, it was clear that children's initial difficulties in '**signing on' and/or 'click and drag'** procedures had also undermined their initial sense [and expectation] or 'easy' movement.

3) PLAYING EXPERIENCE [OBSERVATION] AND BRIEF PLENIARY SESSION

The following comments are a synthesis of children's responses and **observed behaviours** before, during and after playing on 'LEGO Island'. They also represent ad hoc comments, as well as those made during play and in the pleniary session.

- **<u>Background – 'Game Playing' Behaviours & Motivations</u>**

Whilst all Children in the sample were 'games' players, different levels of enthusiasm and skill were apparent. Such variations did not always correlate with age, but more obviously with the **presence of older *brothers*** in the household who are also players. Several 10 year old boys were actually playing on games bought by and/or for older target age groups, often '18 Rated' titles, with specific mention of 'Red Alert', 'Tomb Raider', Duke Newcome' and 'Resident Evil' .

These children focused on the appeal of the **violent** or gruesome aspects of such games

> ".. [Red Alert]..you can blow them up……it's gross..dogs eat men" [B9]

> ".. [Duke Newcome]….you put the men on an electric chair.." [B11]

along with the **'realism' of the experience** given by good graphics

> "..good graphics are important…how it makes you feel like you're really there.." [B9]

It appears that the **emotional intensity** of the experience further heightens the sense of 'realism'.

There seemed to be a degree of aspirational 'status' associated with playing and talking about such games for some of the children, and this is something which, of course, they are unlikely to find in 'LEGO Island'. Even two 9 year olds referred to their enjoyment of [and access to] 'Arcade games', and this together with their appetite for '18 Rated' variants does suggest that **ardent 'Gamers' are unlikely to be a prime target for 'LEGO Island'.** Furthermore, it appears that for some children at least, there is a less parental veto than might have been thought.

From around 9yrs, there was increasing mention of **'sports'** games amongst the boys. Obvious popularity and shared social currency of football games was apparent, with appeal in the ability to **<u>control</u>** players and **compete** against the opposition [..several mentioned their enjoyment of 'two player' games].

The **younger boys** [7 - 8 years], along with the majority of **girls** in the sample were more likely to play 'games' which can be classed as **'Fantasy', 'Fun' and 'Learning'** […..these of course might overlap with each other] .

'PC Genius', 'Super Mario', 'Wallace & Gromit' , 'Super Detective', 'Dangerous Creatures' and 'Encarta' were all mentioned, with clear motivation via cartoon characters, along with **exploration and discovery** themes. Boys were notably motivated by **sensation**, and if not the violence found in older games, then the more **extraordinary** and thrilling features of games.

"….where you can go inside the mountains..! " [B7]

"…it's like a magical kingdom…" [B8]

It may be helpful here in terms of future developments, to explain that the realms of 'Pure Fantasy' are particularly appealing to the youngest boys [7yrs] , who are at a stage when they need to vicariously explore the boundaries of 'good' vs 'evil' within the safe domains of imaginative play . One friendship pair talked about 'Venom' and 'Spiderman' [fantasy figures] as their favourite play things currently, relishing their transformative abilities and extraordinary powers to make extremely good or evil things happen. It is the exploration of **'things that might happen'** which consumes children's play at this stage of their development . Thereafter, they become concerned [to different degrees] with **their own ability to actually 'make things happen'**, to **take control**, **to assert themselves**, **to express autonomy and independence** – this is already apparent in the responses of more serious 'Gamers'.

The girls enjoyed 'games' where they had to answer questions, do quizzes and puzzles and generally 'complete' and 'organise' tasks [eg 'Trivia Fun']. Those in our sample may not be representative of all female player types, but certainly in terms of emotional development, **girls** are more likely to **express their 'control' needs, broadly speaking, in terms of 'organising' [being bossy**], of **discovering answers [being 'clever'**] and **'nurturing' [being 'needed']** These fundamental motivators underpin much behaviour in the 'girls' market, and provide rich and fertile grounds for programme developments.

For the younger and/ or less avid gamers in the boy sample, and for the girls in general, there *appeared* to be less need for 'serious' challenge and/or adrenalin, with one 10 year old playing 'Tetrus' mostly

"… because I'm good at it.." [B10]

The more experienced 'Gamers', on the other hand, seemed to tire of games they had mastered. Indeed, in describing what they looked for in a 'good game', 'different every time you play it' [ie long lasting challenge/ unpredictability] was important.

There are strong indicators from children's attitudes and behaviours across the interviews that within the 'LEGO Island' target market there are two broad 'Player Types' to consider in terms of programme development, positioning and promotional issues

' Serious' Gamers' **'Fun Lovers'**

The **'Fun Lovers'** are likely to be less experienced / skilled game players, who enjoy the **'entertainment'** values of the game, and are less motivated by serious challenge Some, though not necessarily all of these player types may become 'Experienced Gamers' over time, growing the market for more challenging offers from 'LEGO Island' . This segment of the market are **likely to find the 'LEGO Island' offer most appealing and distinctive** vis a vis their current games portfolio.

'Serious Gamers' on the other hand, seek challenge and competition as a core aspect of their enjoyment, though occasionally they do play on less 'taxing' games - 'LEGO Island' has the potential to appeal to these players as **a secondary or occasional source of enjoyment.**

- **<u>Computer Usage & Games Purchasing Behaviours</u>**

In terms of wider usage, **a distinct minority of children use the computer for anything other than games**, with some low mention of 'homework' and/or occasional creative [drawing/ story writing] activities.

Most children claimed to be able to 'start up' activities without help from anyone else, although 7 year olds said they needed help 'finding things' sometimes. In terms of general confidence/ competence levels, It was interesting to note children's 'dexterity', particularly with 'cursor' controls, whilst playing on 'LEGO Island'. There was less ease and facility in general using the 'mouse', but this seemed to be a function of the game rather than discomfort with the 'mouse' facility per se.

There seem to be a number of potential sources for games purchases, and these can be more or less ad hoc depending on household 'type and composition .

Where older siblings are also games players, there seems to be the most frequent influx of games primarily chosen by the older brother but often with shared' usage [and possibly payment] by the younger brother. Certainly **older brothers seem to be a key influence on attitudes and behaviours amongst children 7-11 years**.

At the other purchasing extreme, there may be strict ‘parental controls’ over what game is purchased and when, with ‘Birthday’ and ‘Christmas’ top ups most likely.

It is interesting to note however, that **children mentioned ‘parental veto’ only in terms of ‘cost’ , never on grounds of ‘censorship’.** However, even children from the most restrictive households, are likely to be playing on a further selection of games at a ‘friend’s house’. Hence**, the potential for access to different games is wide across the target group.**

Further purchasing permutations were apparent in part parent/ part child funding purchases, as well as via ‘swapping’ and rentals.

Price awareness seemed to be highest amongst the most enthusiastic ‘Gamers’ [including some 9 year olds], with £20 - £40 seen as the average range.

As a final note on this section, it is worth restating that children in this age target are **highly aware of and receptive to anything new in their market,** they are literally magnets for novelty and newness, and this is true of **boys in particular**. The degree of active interest is often a ‘conversation generator’ in the school playground, and **once something is ‘branded’ as popular then desire and ‘pester’ is activated.** An important element of this however is making sure the ‘conversation’ is ‘kick-started’ by **strong launch and promotional activity**, and obviously **supported by high quality product performance –** children can be harsh critics too.**Introduction to ‘LEGO Island’**

Whilst children were limited to about 30 minutes playing time, and therefore were unable to appreciate the full extent of the LEGO Island offer [none came to realize the ‘Brickster’ role/mission, for example], there was adequate time for them to go through ‘starting’ the programme, ‘building’ and ‘racing’ activities, as well as exploring various parts of the island and its characters. This provided ample opportunity for them to gain an impression of the game, and to experience a range of core activities.

To ensure cohesion, specific suggestions for modification and/or future development are made in the relevant sections throughout.

- **<u>The 'Instruction Manual'</u>**

Children were told that they were going to see a **new** game, and would have some time to play on it. They were asked to try to find out things for themselves where possible , although guidance was offered where repeated difficulties were encountered.

Initially, children were introduced to the game via the 'Instruction Manual', which they were told they could use as and when they needed. Potential use of the manual was explored briefly, with most children claiming that they would only read it if there was something they were unable to discover by 'trial and error'. However, it was notable to observe that **the girls in general used the manual most.** This is in line with published UK findings which reveal that girls 'read more' than boys, more 'books' in particular, and have better reading skills overall. **Boys do however read 'comics', and are strongly 'picture – oriented'.** Again, this **reflects the 'speed' and 'physicality'** inherent in boys of this age.

In terms of a very cursory 'communication check', the manual immediately says **'LEGO'** to all children, and this was **well received by most** with 10 year old girls being slightly less enthusiastic

"…. Okay….it's probably more for boys." [G10]

Although there was little time to explore perceptions and behaviours relating to the LEGO brand, even the oldest boys in our sample talked of playing with it 'sometimes', though as a more 'private' [solitary] pursuit. Given the increasing need of boys of 9 years onwards to identify with their peer group [ie beginnings of the 'separation phase'], and their consequent desire to 'socialise' more with friends, there appears to be an opportunity for **'2 Player Games' -** this has the potential to **enable older boys to take LEGO with them into the more 'public' domains of their adolescent years** without diminishing their **credibility** amongst peers.

Expectations of 'building' and designing things [ie 'making and **'creating'**] were common. Characters [especially 'Pepper'], were regarded as **'fun'**, together with the different forms of transport on offer.

"…lots of different things you can do." [B8]

The sense of '**action**' and dynamism/ movement also contributed to the appeal for a number of children.

There was some feeling from the manual that the game might be for younger children [..from around 5/6 –8/9 yrs was the typical perceived range], though this was up-aged for many [to circa 7-11 yrs] on actually seeing and playing with the game.

- **'Starting Up'**

The game having already been installed, the children were asked about how they would begin . Most knew to click the 'LEGO Island' icon, but the younger children had difficulties understanding that they should then select the **'Run'** botton. Given that children may not recognise this term from the games they are currently playing [and most are not using the computer for other purposes] , a more commonly used and easily recognised term would be helpful

Advise modification: 'GO' or similar […and/or flashing icon]

Interestingly, many children across the age groups were instantly drawn to the **'Free Stuff' icon** - this indicates the power [and familiarity] of **'free'** as a promotional 'pull' in their in their lives, and may provide clues for future marketing activity.

- **'Falling LEGO bricks/ Mindscape visuals' 'Demo Video'**

The instant and positive impression created by the graphics clearly upgrades and up-ages perceptions for most.

There was general excitement and involvement across the sample, with lots of positive exclamations ['Cool'…'Wow'] from the boys in particular. Clearly, playing motivations and expectations were raised, and the majority of children eagerly anticipated the game

"…I like it…..it looks as if it's real….we're in the sea !" [G7]

"…crash!…..he's fallen in the water !.." [B8]

"..you can go on vehicles and on roads and things..its exciting!" [G10]

"….a wicked video !.." [B10]

"……Good 3D graphics ! " [B11]

One 10 year old girl was observed attempting to 'pick' the pizza from out of the screen, such is the involvement level and 'realism' for the children.

Already, the **craving for 'action' and 'sensationalism'** was apparent amongst the boys, perhaps more notably amongst the 'Gamers', but not exclusively so

"..let's crash into him…" [B9]

"..can you kick his head off ?.." [B10]

"..let's try and run into those people.." [B11]

On the other hand, further reinforcement of the appeal of small **quirky features/ details, and the' entertainment' values of the game** to the less experienced players and to the girls in particular, was apparent throughout

"..I liked the characters flipping over.." [G10]

"..there was a parrot telephone.." [G7]

"hey..this bike's got a bell !.." [B9]

"..he's got a flowerpot on his head !" [B8]

As already mentioned, it is likely that 'Fun' values heightened by such detail [along with sophisticated graphics] is likely to encourage occasional play amongst the more serious 'Gamers'

"…I'd probably play on it sometimes…..if I want
a change or if I'm bored….." [B11]

It is particularly **important to maximise the diversity and discover/ 'surprise' element** of the game in this respect for the core market

A further developmental note comes from several comments made by children at this juncture, and that is the need many have to get on with the game – this desire will surely increase once children have been through the game several times, and it is important ti ride the wave of their enthusiasm

"..what do we do…I want to be able to **control** it.." [B9]

Advise Modification : Inform of 'Space Bar' by-pass option *before* Demo Video

- **<u>At the 'Information Centre'</u>**

Children arrive at the Information Centre eager to proceed. Initially, most are pleased to see the Infomaniac - one 8year old boy greeted him with an 'hello'. However, his instructions are clearly not listened to by most children since he **<u>tells</u>** them **too many things**, and quite soon children become frustrated with him and their inability to find direction

"…Oh no, not more of him !…" [B10]

"..he keeps yapping on…" [B11]

It is important to remember the immediacy and 'action' which impel boys lives at this stage in their development, and their orientation to visual cues . Whilst aural communication is obviously important, this should at least be counterbalanced by clear visual cues – currently there appears to be an **'aural overload'** particularly at this 'introductory' phase of the gamei

Inevitably then, for most children, even before they actually 'Sign on', they begin to click randomly at different places on the screen, and for a time , enjoy exploring different areas and facets of the programme. Eventually however, enjoyment is eroded [body language and sighs of exasperation were common] , as children became increasingly **disoriented and 'purposeless'** This resulted in further random clicking, often on the arrows, which took them to parts of the Information Centre they had already seen

"…we're not going anywhere !" [B9]

Several eventually realize that they have to listen to the infomaniac, but do so reluctantly

"..let him finish, for goodness sake !.." [B8]

Advise Modification: Extent of *continuous* information given by Infomaniac to be curtailed .
Early indication of 'Blue Book' as 'entrance' to game – flashing 'Blue Book' to reinforce message

Differences between the player types, and across gender were emerging at the early exploratory stage of the programme. For girls, and younger boys, enjoyment was found primarily in exploring, 'wandering' about different places, and see what they could discover

"..you can find out where places are ..look around and things.." [G10]

".. I'm watering the flowers !.." [G7]

"..I'm pamping the horn.." [B8]

Whilst older boys, and more avid ‘Gamers’, were clearly into action and a sense of challenge respectively

“.. Cool !…we’re in a boat..” [B9]

“..C’mon then, I’ll race you !..” [B10]

- **<u>‘Signing On’</u>**

When eventually children found, or were directed to the ‘Blue Book’, most had no problems following instructions. However, a number of children of all ages failed to complete the task by clicking the ‘check mark’. Again, this could send the children into random clicking mode, whereon the would become further frustrated, distracted and/or disoriented. Whilst impatience is likely to account in the main for children’s oversight , clearer visual indication of the need to complete this task would help.

Further impatience resulted for a few children who made a mistake in entering their names and did not know how to ‘delete’.

Advise Modification: ‘Flashing check mark’ and eraser symbol or similar

- **<u>‘Click & Drag’ Procedure</u>**

The majority of children had difficulty with this task – only three of them accomplished this without help, and these included two 7 year old girls who [unusually] used the Instruction Manual for instruction.

The problem here related in part to the fact that , once again, the children failed to listen to instructions, but also that they failed to *see* when they had successfully ‘connected’ their character to the chosen location. It is likely that difficulties were further exacerbated by a general feeling on ‘weariness’ for many.

Advise Modification: Stronger visual cues, and possibly sound effects, to register ‘connection eg larger location icons signalling via ‘thicker’ flashing bands of colour . [The Infomaniac may also need to demonstrate this operation] .

- **<u>Building Activity</u>**

Given time constraints, all children were directed to ‘Formula One’ Race Track, with ‘Pepper’ as their chosen character. Interestingly, a clear majority of children spontaneously selected ‘Pepper’, seeing him as ‘cool’ and obviously relevant to them. All were quite happy, even excited, at the

prospect of racing a car, whilst the 7 year old girls alone were less keen on the idea of building in general.

Because many children arrive at the track slightly bemused, many miss the instruction to click on the racing car icon, and again begin to random click – this can further undermine their sense of purpose, and dislocate them.

Advise Modification: Racing Car icon to be bigger [and/or flashing]

Once in the 'garage', children are once again **eager to complete a task.** There are, however, several obstacles. A common misunderstanding that the flashing component of the workshop floor is already in situ hinders progress – only one pair of 10 year old boys worked this out for themselves

> "…I get it !…..the part which is plashing – you need to get that.." [B10]

Advise Modification: Transparent component

A few children [again unable to listen to or absorb spoken information] did not realise that the parts shelf actually rotated – again this was a point for further clicking, which could repeatedly reintroduce 'Bill Ding' [increasingly annoying], or take them elsewhere in the game. A sense of having little control is quite apparent by now for many.

Advise Modification: 'Bill Ding' to show moving shelf and how to operate, along with spray paint features to [re]capture motivation. Longer term, greater flexibility of movement [ie shelf to move backwards and forwards], and range/choice of 'personalisation' features ie more paints, badges, numbers and other 'extras'.

Several boys [mostly serious 'Gamers'] were disappointed at the pre-set building order, looking for greater freedom to assemble the car as they wanted. This relatively quick conclusion suggests that this aspect of the game has the potential too quickly loose its challenge/ novelty value, and become overly repetitive/ predictable

> "..they might as well have done it for you……you have to make it as they want you to…you had to pick up a certain piece……" {B10]

> "..it would be good if you had to buy parts to upgrade.." [B11]

Advise Modification: Longer term potential to choose different building 'options', with varying degrees of 'freedom' and levels of difficulty.

The ‘Mini Television’ feature was looked to as a secondary source of information by most children, to help clarify which component should be selected. Again this could add to children’s confusion

Advise Modification: Flashing component to represent part sought, with option to switch on/off [ie ‘solution area’ is chosen, to enhance ‘challenge’ and ‘control’]

Having completed the car, children were clearly pleased with their obvious achievement

> “..we’ve got our own car !..” [B9]

Note the importance of ‘ownership’, and by inference the **potential in greater personalisation .**

This task done, several respondents attempted to spray their car only to find that this was not possible, eventually realising they should have done this earlier.

Advise Modification: Greater flexibility re *when* spraying is possible, and/or more conspicuous flashing color palette signal to notify/ remind children of option throughout

Two players unfortunately ‘lost’ their car once it was completed by accidentally ‘over clicking’ – this was obviously annoying to them having spent a long time working out how to build it in the first place

> “..Be careful !.…we just lost our car……” [B9]

> “..don’t crash our car up whatever you do..it took us ages to build it…..” [B10]

Advise Modification: Intermittent ‘Save’ option

At the point of completion, several children were obviously waiting to learn what to do next

> “..What do we do now our cars done ?..” [B8]

The time it takes for their accomplishment to be acknowledged and instruction given for their progress is too long for many – a further opportunity exists to click randomly

Advise Modification: More immediate response on completion of building task , and information on ‘next step’

At the Race Track

Children are excited once again at the prospect of a race

"…we're going to race !.." [B8]

"..I love racing games." [B9]

Confronted with a screen where there is little action [ie only the 'still' set is in view] at certain points, many children are unclear how to proceed, or indeed if they're already on the track

"..how do you start to race it ?.." [B9]

"..are we in the car…. ?" [B8]

Further confusion was encountered at the next step, where several children were unsure how to actually start the car

"..what do we do now ?…we need a driver.." [B8]

By this time, tension and trepidation was clear for several children

"…please don't let it be gone!..Yes..we're driving!.." [B10]

Advise Modification: Speedier arrival of 'Instruction bearer', visual signal that racing car itself is to be clicked, and 'flashing steering wheel' [ignition keys] to indicate 'Drive'

- **In the Race**

Track features in terms of 'ghosts', 'skeletons' and the like were appreciated, providing **a clear enemy and purpose** which children could easily understand

"..no ghost scares me….Oh no you don't ..we're going to beat you !.." [B9]

"..it's cool…quite a good game…there are ghosts..I got past them.." [B11]

Indeed some children suggested more 'tasks'/obstacles en route to enhance 'reward' and playing options

"..grab some of the LEGO stuff….grab the people.." [B10]

Whilst the race itself was exciting, many children [including some serious 'Gamers'], became confused in terms of their direction and location on the track

".where am I supposed to go in the race..?" [B10]

"..this is really hard…" [B8]

"..it keeps going off – crashing into walls.." [B9]

"..you can't see where you're going.." [B10]

"..there isn't anywhere to go..you don't get out of this race …press escape..get out..go anywhere but this !.." [B11]

Currently, the level of difficulty experienced takes the game **beyond the skills and expectations of younger and less serious Gamers**, and potentially into a more 'challenging' level of play than sits comfortably with the 'LEGO Island' offer overall. A number of suggestions were made to **enhance control**

".make the track bigger..it's too hard to **control**.." [B11]

"..have turning arrows to help the little kids [!] know which way to go.." [B10]

" ..it would be better if it said 'last lap'.." [B9]

"..a clock to tell you the speed…so's you'd know when to slow down…." [B10]

When children do finish the race, there is **little overt sense of triumph** either from them, or the game

Q.. "..did you win ?.." A.."..I think so.." [Boys 9]

"..we stopped..did we win?..what happened.." [Boys 8]

Furthermore, there is indication that a 'score' or tangible evidence of achievement is sought

"..get those pizzas..I think if you get the pizza you get points or something…" [B10]

"..we're coming third aren't we ?." [B9]

Advise Modification : Include 'turning arrows', route 'map' to show direction and position vs opponent [and 'lap' number], speedometer and clear 'Finish' announcement

Also,potential for 'automatic' shift to 'score cube' or similar to show achievement

- **<u>The Characters</u>**

Children had the opportunity to meet several characters during the course of their time with the programme, some through their 'story' selected at the Information Centre, and others via their roles within the game.

Overall, the characters were appreciated and thought to be '**good fun'**. For boys in particular**, the way they 'come apart'** is especially liked, partly tapping the **visual 'sensation'** they love, but also for the older boys adding the **realism of LEGO** product. This 'realism' is important, as already mentioned, to elevate the age status of the game overall amongst this older target.

Where characters are found to have most 'personality' through what they do and/ or how they look, the most obvious and immediate bonds are formed. Hence 'Pepper' is a key favourite, with his 'cool' cap and skateboard.

Where characters are perceived to 'talk too much', their appeal is eroded, and other qualities they may have are often overlooked. Mama Brickolini is appreciated most in her introduction story, although at the Pizzeria, she is seen to be a little dull.

Whilst it was not possible to explore perceptions of all characters in any detail, it became clear that **visual cues and characteristics** are most powerful in capturing children's imagination, and that much of the humour invested in dialogue was missed. Obviously, as children become familiar with the game, this will change, and humour found in different aspects will enriched the experience, providing new things to 'discover'. That said, however, there remains an **imbalance of verbal over visual character cues/ communication across the game as a whole.**

There may be an opportunity in the longer term to extend 'personality' aspects of the characters, enabling children to interact with them at different levels and thereby **building on the 'relationship' dimension of the game**. Such developments also carry the potential to **enhance character distinctiveness and fun values**, and might be along the lines of, their owning 'strange pets', presenting puzzles or jokes [there would need to be a good range of these], or having a passion for hamburgers, for example.

Advise Modification: Ensure range and diversity of visual cues and characteristics associated with characters, to help establish different personalities, and build 'relationship' potential.

- **<u>The 'Overall' 'LEGO Island' Experience</u>**

As part of the pleniary session, after children had finished playing on the game, they were asked for 'top of mind' responses, what were the main spontanous thoughts and feelings they were left with.

There were many positive things which children had to say [despite the frustrations some had obviously encountered] .

The **variety of things to do and see** was commonly mentioned, with **different forms of transport** and **quirky details/features** appealing in particular. The '**Exploration' and 'Discovery'** element appealed to less experienced/ avid gamers. The following comments are typical, and seem to sum up children's responses at this point

> "…I drove onto the sea !..." [B7]
>
> "It's brilliant..you can go places and make people look fun..you can make it night and play with the radio…..put a plantpot on his head.." [B9]
>
> "..you can go on different vehicles, in different worlds and find different places……..its like an **Activity Holiday**…lively, not square or boring.. **you can get out and do loads of things.…" [G10]**

'Window shopping' rather than specific 'mission' seemed to appeal to the girls in particular

> "…you can just drive to different places…you don't have to win or

For some, of the older boys there was the suggestion of greater realism, in terms of what available on the Island,

> "..we want a MacDonalds on the Island…… things which we have.. …….money to buy cars parts [B10]]

Also implicit in this comment is the need for a greater degree of choice and interaction, something which the more serious 'Gamers' are most likely to request, though we must remember that for these player types the game holds less appeal overall

> " its easy compared with what we play on our own.." [B9]
>
> "..its all the same thing, once you've played it once then it becomes boring…" [B10]
>
> " ..You can't get on to different levels.." [B10]
>
> "..I wanted to kill him…you can't blow their heads off.."[B10]

"there's not enough action..speed….fighting.." [B11]

For these serious 'Gamers', the degree of scrutiny, and the level of detail and sophistication required [..indeed, already found in more adult games] , would potentially undermine appeal for less experienced players, captivated by 'fun', exploration and 'gentle' challenge/ competition,

Most common spontaneous weaknesses mentioned across the sample reflect the findings across all sections of the research, and once again, reiterate the sense of a

Lack of Direction/ Purpose

'Disorientation'/ Dislocation

Lack of Progress/ Achievement /Completion

Typical comments made at this stage in the interview include

"…I was in a car…..I couldn't get out.." [G7]

"…I thought it …[*the car*] had disappeared but we were in it…" [B8]

"…I was at the Pizza Parlour and I didn't know how to get to the Petrol Station.." [B9]

"…I didn't know what I was doing at first…I clicked something and I kept going all over the place.." [G10]

These comments reiterate the points already made in the 'Supplementary Questionnaire' section of this report. It is clear that children must be given **clear direction and information <u>early in the game</u>** to enable their full involvement and participation in moving around and through it. This is important if enthusiasm is to be fully harnessed.

Children need to know instantly how to 'bypass' areas, how to move backwards and forwards in the game, and generally feel that they are able to **'manage' their own playing experience.**

Further guidance cues are important throughout, in this respect, to ensure that children feel they are **in control**, at a rational level [eg 'where am I now…where do I want to go…how do I get there'], and at an emotional level [eg 'what choices are there…how do I achieve that….what have I achieved for my efforts'].

Speedier on screen response to children's actions is also important, not only in avoiding random clicking, but also in providing a sense of 'structure' and

progress. Pacier responses will also contribute to the overall ‘feel’ of excitement and action which is so important to this target

> “..when you click on stuff, it needs to go faster on to stuff you want it to go on..” [B9]

In thinking about the ‘feel’ of the game overall, although children did not spontaneously talk about the music, to was clear from their observed behaviours, [and a ‘neutral’/mid point score] that selections were generally appreciated and ‘in keeping’ with the game. This is worthy of note, since there is likely to be a diversity of musical tastes across the age/gender spectrum in question.

4) BROAD SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

'LEGO Island' has distinctive appeal for a Pre-Secondary School target of 7-10/11year olds, with particular strength in

Quality Graphics
Variety of things to do/see
Features/Detail

and

'LEGO' connection [particularly, though not exclusively for 'Enthusiasts']

With increasingly 'private' attachments to the LEGO brand as children move towards adolescence , it is likely that the greatest interest and potential 'popularity' will be generated with a core of 8-10 year olds.

There is distinctiveness and appeal in the fact that 'LEGO Island' is seen as a game **specifically aimed at this target group** [ie the 'Tweens'], rather than the younger ['Kid'] , or older ['Teen'] ends of the market . This dimension of 'Child Property' should be fully utilised via promotions

The game appeals most strongly to less experienced [girl and boy] players, who are motivated by 'Fun'/ Entertainment, 'Exploration' and 'Discovery' , rather than more 'seriously' challenging games.

There appears to be potential for 'occasional' usage amongst the more experienced 'Gamers', who will find appeal in the 'fun' and 'novelty' aspects of the game as a change from the more 'adult' [often '18 Rated'] variants which they more regularly play. It is important to bear in mind that gaming attitude and/or skill does not always correlate directly with age of child [… 9 year old 'Gamers' and 'Fun loving' 11 year olds were apparent in our sample]

Increased game playing skills amongst less experienced players has the potential to grow the market, and provide a springboard for more challenging LEGO game offers over time.

In terms of games development, It is important to ensure that the 'Fun/ Entertainment' values of the game [ie features/details to discover, and with which to 'create' anew] are particularly strong. In this way, motivation and appeal amongst all player types is harnessed, along with the potential to generate and build on **'playground buzz'.** Furthermore, every opportunity to animate 'LEGO Island', along with the LEGO brand, should be maximised.

LEGO Media games developments can express and utilize the established values of the LEGO brand, and has potential to further enhance its 'fun' 'contemporaneity' and 'aspirational' associations. The 'LEGO' brand no longer has to be 'put away' with childhood, but can credibly 'grow up' with the child.

As currently presented however, ‘LEGO Island’ is unlikely to realise its full potential amongst the target audience, with clear and immediate need to address certain game specifics [see *‘modification’ guidelines – Section 3*]

More fundamental [and/or longer term requirements] relate to the following broad areas, which should be addressed to ensure the children will come back to the game time and again :

- **Clear and Concise Information**

Currently there is an imbalance of verbal to visual messages. Children are **unable or unwilling to listen to and process vast chunks of *verbal* information**. Such communications should be presented in **‘bite-sized’** portions, and where instructions are given, corresponding **visual cues** should be offered as appropriate. This is particularly **crucial at the ‘introductory’ stage of the game**, ie ‘Signing up’ and ‘Click and Drag’ procedures.

In order to help children better ‘manage’ their movement within and through the game, early communication of ‘space bar’ and ‘cursor’ facility should be given.

- **Framework for Full Involvement & Appeal**

The task which confronts ‘LEGO Island’ is to **find a balance** between two seemingly irreconcilable needs – the drive for **‘repetition’ and ‘familiarity’ with** that of **‘surprise’/ ‘unpredictability’**. Currently, the game can be experienced as a *mixture* of both, but at the extremes, becomes either too easy [‘boring’], or too hard, thus creating some dissonance, and a lack of ‘synergy’. .

It is in the realms of the ‘unpredictable’ that children *discover* things and meet new challenges - to have a range of options and choices with diverse outcomes keeps the game ‘novel’ However, in order to build player ‘confidence’ , these elements should be set within a set of clearly established and constant ‘procedures’ , providing children with parameters which help to inform their playing behaviours and responses.

There is **further potential to enhance both ‘procedural’** [ie clarity of direction, purpose and progress], **and ‘novelty’ aspects** [ie ability to discover and create] of ‘LEGO Island’, as detailed throughout the report..

- **Sense of ‘Completion’ and ‘Accomplishment’**

Children need to see tangible evidence of their success, and are likely to want to ‘display’ and/or share this with others. A ‘Save’ facility, particularly for building activities, would address this need, along with ‘automatic’ progress [or ‘score cube’] reports.

Further opportunities exist to strengthen ‘entertainment’ values, and build ‘relationships’ with characters via

Extended range of characters, and individually distinctive attributes

More ways to ‘personalise’ playing elements [‘racing car’, also ways of ‘addressing’ players after sign on

Speedier transfer between locations within and across different parts of the island. This will further reinforce the sense of ‘action’ and ‘pace’ so Important to the boy target

Development of ‘2 Player’ games

Given the spontaneous mention of and request for a ‘2 Player’ game from several children , and bearing in mind the increasing identification of this target with their ‘peer group’, there appears to be a further developmental opportunity for LEGO Media in this area.

APPENDIX

Broad Topic Guide

U.S Questionnaire

Supplementary Questionnaire

BROAD TOPIC GUIDE
LEGO MEDIA

INTRODUCTION & WARM UP

Exchange names …..explain task…not like school/not a test……want to understand what children their age like to do, the sorts of things they like to play with……..going to look at a computer game [..not my idea, my job is to understand what children will like and what they won't like about it…really need their help]……..mention tape recorder

First of all, **[Younger to 9yrs]**..I see you've bought something along which is very special to you …tell me a little bit about it …….**[For older]**…tell me about the things you've been up to in the summer holidays….. what have you played with ….

What about the computer [*…….. allow spontaneous comments and probe*

What do you use it for

What's your favourite programme […what makes that especially good]

Do you use any other programmes […can you remember what they're called]

Any programmes that you used to use a lot but you don't anymore [how come]…….. anything you've grown out of [..why don't you enjoy it anymore]

When do you tend to use the computer

Do you use it on your own…or with others [who]

Who gets things started when you're using the computer [..help with installation/set up etc]

*How much does the average computer 'programme'/'game' [**use their language**] cost……. Who tends to buy them……have you ever really pestered for one…… what happened…….. have you ever spent Your own money on one […. what sort would you spend your own money on]*

……../2

INTRODUCE LEGO ISLAND

I've got a computer game here which I want you to have a little play with **..you're the first children to play with it…..**[… *I don't know very much about this sort of thing…no children…so you're the expert…..*]

SHOW CHILDREN THE 'COMIC' AND THE INTRODUCTION TO THE GAME……..

Now you know what it's called, what do you expect it to be like… what sorts of things do you think it might have in it ……..*[probe for any positive/ negative **expectations**]*

What would you do if you'd just seen this game either in the shop or at your friends house…… how would you start to play [……*explore if they would read the manual……. Ask for 'adult' assistance…… experiment on own/ with a friend etc…*]

Okay, so 'let's go', you can use the 'comic' or play with the game or both……spend some time getting to know more …….try to do as much as you can by yourselves

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO EXPLORE THE GAME [**C.30 MINS**] **–** SHOUT OUT WHEN THERE'S SOMETHING THEY REALLY LIKE OR DISLIKE ……**GIVE INFORMATION ONLY AS NECESSARY** **ENSURE CHILDREN ALL DO SAME ACTIVITY……..**OBSERVE LEVELS OF UNDERSTANDING & INVOLVEMENT ……LISTEN FOR AREAS OF APPEAL, FRUSTRATION ETC.

PLENIARY SESSION

Okay……. You've all had chance to get more of an idea about the game……let's have a chat about it

What did you like best about it……..anything else**……..Anything you didn't like that much…….**

What would you tell your friends about this game …….what would …[***… other children, parents, teachers***] think about it [how come]…….

What age children would do you think its for…….what makes it right for that age then…..

Is it for girls, boys or both…….what makes you think that then

What's the main thing about this programme that makes it different from other things you can by …….. what makes it really unusual […… anything that makes it the same as others you can get]

……/3

SPECIFIC PROMPTS
[….. SPEND LONGER HERE FOR FRIENDSHIP PAIRS – WRITE DOWN RESPONSES]

Characters ……likes/ dislikes and why

'Sign on'……. Likes/ dislikes/ ease etc

LEGO Island….. what about the way it looks in general,
Best/ worst place……particular features,
Favourite discoveries on island etc

Activities What sorts of things did you find to do….which
Did you enjoy…….are there enough things to keep
you interested……what's your favourite
Activity *[Construction/ racing, exploring etc]*

'Accessibility' What about the way you move around in the
game [……*easy/ fast/exciting ?*] …… how
about getting from one place to
another……. How did you *<u>feel</u>* while you were
moving around ….. what sorts of things went
through your mind…..

Construction

Racing/Flying [helicopter Driving [***as apt to group activity***]

Dialogue ….....how about the things they say….[remember
anything in particular]…… is there enough
talking ……[…accent]

Music/ Sound effects

What have you learned from this game

Are there enough things about it to keep you interested….. is there lots going on…… would it keep you absolutely 'glued' to the screen

Improvements If you were in charge of LEGO Island and
you wanted children like you to really love it,
What one thing would you keep the
same……what would you change…….

'LEGO' Is this the sort of 'game' you'd expect
LEGO to come up with ……..

TAKE FRIENDSHIP PAIRS THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRE [ATTACHED] AND FILL IN ANSWERS FOR THEM

OKAY…… NOW I JUST NEED YOUR HELP TO QUICKLY FILL IN A QUESTIONNAIRE……. WHAT I NEED IS FOR YOU TO LISTEN TO THE STATEMENTS THAT I'M GOING TO READ OUT, AND TELL ME IF YOU THINK YOU AGREE WITH IT

A LOT

A LITTLE BIT

NOT AT ALL

[REMEMBER, I REALLY NEED YOU TO SAY WHAT YOU THINK, BECAUSE THAT WILL HELP ME DO MY JOB BETTER]

2] DESIGNED WITH CHILDREN IN MIND

I agree with the following……..	A Lot	A Little	Not At Al
❑ You don't have to worry about hitting the keyboard too hard			
❑ When you do something in the programme, you always get a quick and understandable response			
❑ You feel in control over what's on the screen and how long it stays there			
❑ You know how to exit at any point you want to			
❑ The icons you can click on are big and easy to move with the mouse			
❑ The introduction sequence is quite brief and you can skip past It if you want to			
❑ When you click the mouse, or hold down a key only one command is sent to the computer			
❑ The programme always explains what you need to do…or lets You know when you've made a mistake			

3] LEARNING THINGS

❑ The programme offers enough information about the different Things you might be interested in			
❑ The things you see and hear whilst playing always make sense to you			
❑ There is talk in the programme			
❑ Everytime you use it you discover something new and different			
❑ There are plenty of challenges to make you want to keep playing			

	A Lot	A Little	Not At All
❑ There are lots of things in this programme that children are interested in and would know about			
❑ This programme is for girls and boys			
❑ This programme would not hurt anybody feelings wherever They came from			
❑ You can use your own ideas as part of the game			
❑ You can learn more and more things from this programme			
❑ There are enough things to do and see in this programme			

4] 'FUN' TO USE

	A Lot	A Little	Not At All
❑ This programme is fun to use			
❑ The graphics make sense and children will like them			
❑ Lots of different age groups and types of people will like this			
❑ Children will want to come back and play with this again and again			
❑ You never know what will happen next			
❑ Children will understand what is said, and the different sounds they hear			
❑ The programme offers different degrees of difficulty for you To choose from			
❑ The programme always responds to what you do			
❑ The whole idea of LEGO Island and what it includes makes sense			

5] DIFFERENT FEATURES

	A Lot	A Little	Not At All
❑ This programme speaks			
❑ You can print from this programme			
❑ You can save a record of how well you did in the Games you played			
❑ The way you are guided through the game is smooth and Makes sense			
❑ You can add your own ideas into the way the game looks			
❑ You can make the sound louder or softer, and you can turn it On or off			
❑ The computer sometimes seems to be talking just to you			
❑ You can save the game and exit, then start it again whenever You want			

6] HOW MUCH IT'S WORTH

❑ ……This programme will cost £29.99…….tick <u>one</u> box if you think this is

VERY CHEAP ☐ **QUITE CHEAP** ☐ **REASONABLE** ☐

QUITE EXPENSIVE ☐ **VERY EXPENSIVE** ☐

- If you were out shopping with your mum, would you
  - …… Really pester for it…keep asking and asking until you got it
  - Just mention it and see if she said ‘no’ and then forget it
  - Not bother to ask for it at all

7] A BIT ABOUT YOU……

BOY ……

GIRL ……

AGE ……

SCHOOL YEAR ……

HOW MANY BROTHER …… THEIR AGE [S] ……
HOW MANY SISTERS …… THEIR AGE[S] ……

THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HELP

SOME OF YOUR OWN OPINIONS ABOUT LEGO ISLAND
[Supplementary Questionnaire]

HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT THE GAME OVERALL……..?

WHAT DID YOU LIKE THE BEST OF ALL….?

WHAT DID YOU THINK WAS NOT SO GOOD ?

WHAT WOULD YOU DEFINITELY CHANGE

HOW MANY MARKS WOULD YOU GIVE IT OUT OF TEN ……../10

Your Name…… Your Age……..

Please give marks out 10 for the following areas…….. like at school, where full mark [10 out of 10] is the very top score you can give, and nought [0 out of 10] is the bott score

1] .How easy it is to get through the programme …….../10

2] The graphics …….../10

3] The characters …….../10

4] The island and what's on it ……./10

5] The Music ……./10

6] The Voices [.the way they talk] ……./10

7] The language/ words they use ……../10

8] The Sound Effects ……../10

9] The choice you get in term of different degrees of difficulty ……./10

10] The variety and choice of things to do ……../10

11] Things to build [..the 'construction' parts] ……../10

12] Moving and getting around the Island ……./10

13] Driving the car/ Riding on the Jet Skis/ Flying the helicoper ……./10

14] The chance to learn things from the programme ……./10

15] The 'Instruction Manual' ……./10

NOW, CAN YOU PLEASE PUT A TICK NEXT TO THE ANSWER YOU AGREE WITH MOST OF ALL

- ❑ The programme is for

  Children the same age as me …….

  Younger than me …….

  Older than me …….

- ❑ The programme is more for

  Boys ……

  Girls ……

  Both ……

When you meet your friends what will you tell them about LEGO Island ?

……

……

……

What will they be the most interested to find out about ?

……

……

What's the main thing that makes LEGO Island different from other programmes

……